

Steal This Hook!

The Lhazaar Principalities

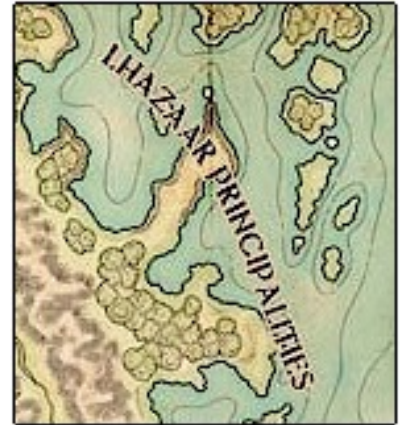
By Doug Beyer



The Lhazaar Principalities off Khorvaire's northeastern coast are a lawless frontier spread across a chain of unforgiving islands. The dangers of the reefs, the power-jockeying of the sea barons, and the secrets of the deep should call out to you as a DM: Lhazaar is a land of seafaring cinematic drama. Dip your toe into these adventure hooks that all take place around those mysterious isles of the Lhazaar Principalities.

Shadows over Lhazaar

Prince Ryger ir'Wynarn dreams of uniting the Lhazaar Principalities under one banner -- his. The other princes of Lhazaar never showed interest before in handing over control of their fleets to him, but that's changing, and the change makes at least one dwarven sea-lass nervous. Talula Ironspine, captain of a small but determined fleet of ships near Orgalos Island, thought nothing of it when one pirate lord declared his fealty to Ryger, but now two other sea barons have added their fleets to his. Then came the meeting.



Talula met personally with Prince Ryger at his request, in his landside digs at Regalport. He asked for her loyalty with a charming smile, giving her the chance to throw his own wine in his face -- a gesture he did not appreciate. She was allowed to leave -- but returned to the seaport to find her flagship ablaze and many of her crew slaughtered.

Now Talula seeks revenge, and more -- a way to stop Ryger's bid for power in Lhazaar. She turns to her trusted contacts in the area, who put out the call for skilled adventurers willing and able to help Captain Talula with her mission. The adventurers who answer her call, however, may discover that Ryger has made a deal with a dark force to help convert the other princes and captains to his side -- the shadowy lich Vol, who may be using him only to consolidate power for her own evil purposes.

Scribblings of the Driggzl the Mad

Down in one of the brine-washed sea-caves along the coast of Questor Island lies the body of a gnome rogue. The unfortunate gnome's decomposing hand clutches an ancient parchment, on which some half-mad goblin scribed a series of riddles centuries ago. The gnome never finished the quest detailed in the goblin scribblings, but a party of treasure-hunting PC adventurers might be able to do just that. However the elves of House Thuranni seek information that will bring them across the heroes' path; in fact, the gnome may have died from a poison known to be used by local Thuranni agents.

Swimming the Cold Seas

A swimming race is held annually, from Cliffscape on the mainland to the nearest shore of Tempest Isle. Only

the foolish and the hardy ever enter due to the unforgiving, cold stretch of sea between the two shores -- not to mention the hungry sea creatures who inhabit it -- but the purse, supplied by Prince Ryger, is quite handsome. The winner also earns a chance at a private audience with Ryger himself, aboard the *Dragoneye*, flagship of his Seadragons.

The Broken Scepter

"Hush, boy, and I'll tell you about the Broken Scepter of Lhazaar," says the old pirate. "It's said that, long ago, a king from far in the West had a summoner ally who called forth a demon to do the king's bidding. The demon escaped the summoner's magic, stole the king's mystic scepter, and fled for the East. A lone knight with brave heart and pure thoughts journeyed out to kill the demon and recover the scepter, and finally met up with it here in Lhazaar. The knight and demon, so the story goes, waged a battle that took them all around the isles, and in the end the knight's sword landed true and mortally wounded the demon. But in a final act of spite, the demon bit down on the scepter, shattering it with such force that the pieces were spread all around Lhazaar. Now, the idea is that the pieces are still lost, and any sea-dog with an ale in him will tell you he's found a piece or two. My guess is, if there is such a treasure, that it's probably best left unassembled. The affairs of demons are best left alone, I reckon. But that's just me."

Bloorrg the Irate Pirate

Hulking and powerful but not terribly charismatic, Bloorrg the ogre pirate captain does a good job of attacking and pillaging merchant ships in the Lhazaar Sea but a poor job of maintaining a loyal crew. That changes when he surprises and defeats a cargo ship full of dedicated wrights, furtive filchers, and iron defenders, and he suddenly gains the crew he's always wanted. Bloorrg knows enough to keep one person alive -- Salandri, the artificer who created the constructs -- and uses her to command the construct crew. Now his ship is an efficient pillaging machine, a scourge of the seas; sea barons, merchant kings and other parties have begun to take notice. The PCs may be contacted by a merchant captain looking for experts to track down Bloorrg and his unusual crew, or by a rival pirate needing backup for a planned raid of his construct pets. Perhaps a former member of Bloorrg's crew, who narrowly escaped being eaten by the irate pirate after the constructs arrived, brings the heroes a message pleading for help from the captive artificer Salandri.

Mini-Hooks

- In a fishing village on Traglorn Isle, the heroes discover evidence of an underground slave trade leading all the way to Farlnen Island.
- A mystical maelstrom between Regalport and Port Krez destroys several ships; the House Lyrandar representative who announces its danger may also be its source.
- A barmaid confides in the party that she's a landbound mermaid, and she asks for their help to break a curse that is keeping her from returning to the sea.
- A gang of sahuagin riding sea tigers (*Monster Manual III*, page 147) assaults a coastal village, and a powerful elven wizard appears to be aiding them.
- A local sea prince seeks protection for a secret project to haul up the remains of a sunken ship -- that turns out to harbor angry undead.
- A trio of dwarves of House Kundarak, their two-year-long shift at Dreadhold completed, set sail for Tantamar, but never reach the shore. Representatives of the Warding Guild in Tantamar seek help to discover what happened to them.
- A wealthy dwarf assembles materials required to complete an eldritch machine capable of raising part of the sea floor and turning the Lhazaar Isles into linked mountain chains.

About the Author

Doug Beyer spent a lot of time getting philosophy degrees until he figured out that he should just move to Seattle and become a web developer for Wizards of the Coast. Now he spends his days working on games and his evenings playing them. Doug uses the time normally allotted for sleeping to lurk on the Wizards.com message boards as his alter ego, WotC_Doog.

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